

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims

Claims 16-28 are currently pending in the application with claims 16, 17, and 22-27 withdrawn from examination as directed to non-elected subject matter. Claims 21 and 28 have been canceled merely in an effort to expedite prosecution and therefore the cancellation of claims 21 and 28 is without prejudice, without intent to acquiesce in any rejection of record, and without intent to abandon any previously claimed subject matter.

Claims 16, 17, and 22-27 have been withdrawn as directed to non-elected subject matter and are hereby canceled.

Allowed Claims

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the allowance of claims 18-20.

Discussion of the 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) Rejections

Claims 21 and 28 were rejected under 35 USC § 102(e) as being allegedly anticipated by Endl et al (US 5,888,813). Without conceding to the merits of any of the Examiner's allegations and solely in an effort to expedite prosecution, the rejected claims have been canceled, rendering these rejections moot. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) rejections.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, the application is considered to be in good and proper form for allowance and the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,
McDonnell Boehnen Hulbert & Berghoff LLP

Date: May 6, 2004

By: _____

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anita Terpstra", written over a horizontal line.

Anita Terpstra
Registration No. 47,132